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CHINESE COMMUNIST TERMS FOR GINNED AND UNGINNED COTTON

In interpreting cotton production statistics published by the People's Republic of China, one problem has been to determine whether the general term mien-hua (cotton) means ginned or unginned cotton. A search of available published material from Communist China has turned up two publications which give pertinent and authoritative information on this problem. The conclusion drawn from these two sources is that the term mien-hua, when used in cotton production statistics of Communist China, means ginned cotton.

The two publications are (1) Mien-fang Kung-ch'eng (Cotton Spinning), Volume I, a technical monograph by Lu Te-k'uan, published in Shanghai by the Hsien-wei Ch'u-pan-she, November 1951; and (2) Hua-tung Nung-min (East China Farmer), an agricultural periodical published in Shanghai by the Hua-tung Jen-min Ch'u-pan-she, 25 April 1953. Terms in parentheses in the passages from these publications quoted below appear as such in the original text. Bracketed notes have been added by the author of this report.

The following passage is taken from Mien-fang Kung-ch'eng. In this discussion of cotton terminology, the Chinese author has supplied the English translations appearing in parentheses.

"The term mien-hua (cotton) is a popular term used to refer to cotton in general. Before the separation of the cotton fiber from the cotton seed, cotton is referred to as tzu-mien (seed cotton). After the cotton has been ginned, it is referred to as p'i-mien or yun-mien (ginned cotton). To facilitate shipping and storage, the ginned cotton is compressed into mien-pao (cotton bales), the average weight of China's cotton bales packed by machinery being 500 pounds."

The type of cotton referred to in cotton production statistics is specifically identified in the following quotation from the Hua-tung Nung-min. Here, the Chinese author has placed the term "p'i-mien," i.e., ginned cotton, in parentheses immediately following the term mien-hua, thus indicating that these terms have the same meaning in this context.

"After the liberation of China, the people's government adopted a policy of establishing fixed ratios between cotton and grain prices. This policy has stimulated the production of mien-hua, so much that it has nearly doubled in the past 3 years. The total production of mien-hua (p'i-mien) in China in 1952 exceeded 25 million tan about [1,250,000 metric tons]."

The following passage from Mien-fang Kung-ch'eng corroborates the argument that mien-hua means ginned cotton. Note that the 1936 and 1950 production figures are also given in bales weighing 500 pounds each, and that conversion from shih tan (one shih tan equals 50 kilograms) to bales is done without loss of weight. Thus, cotton production here means production of ginned cotton.

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"China's cotton production [mien-ch'an, an abbreviation of mien-hua sheng-ch'an, meaning cotton production] in 1936 totaled 17 million shih tan or about 3,700,000 bales. Although production declined during the war against Japan, it is estimated that cotton production in 1950 reached 14 million shih tan or about 3 million bales. Since it is estimated that China's consumption of yuan-mien [ginned cotton] at present [1951] is 20 million shih tan or 4,250,000 bales, it is necessary to increase our production by a considerable amount."

The following table, also from the Mien-fang Kung-ch'eng, gives production statistics for yuan-mien [ginned cotton] for the major countries of the world.

World Production of Ginned Cotton*
(Unit: 1,000 bales, each bale 500 pounds)

<u>Country</u>	<u>1935-1939 Average</u>	<u>Postwar Average</u>	<u>1949-1950</u>	<u>1950-1951</u>
China	2,855	1,943	1,700	2,200 **
Soviet Union	3,430	2,368	2,700	3,000 **
US	13,149	11,931	15,920	9,700

*Based on figures published by the International Cotton Advisory Committee in 1950.

**Later estimates place the figure for China at about 3,000 and for the Soviet Union at about 12,400 [presumably the figure for unginned cotton].

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